

Thornton Hall
Dartmouth College Campus
Hanover
Grafton County
New Hampshire

HABS No. NH-70

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pa.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

THORNTON HALL

Location: Dartmouth College Campus, Hanover, Grafton County, New Hampshire.

Present Owner: Dartmouth College.

Present Occupant: Dartmouth College.

Present Use: College classrooms and offices.

Brief Statement
of Significance:

Thornton Hall, with Wentworth Hall which was built as part of the same project and is very similar, are the two oldest buildings surviving at Dartmouth. They were designed by Ammi B. Young, and as illustrative of his early style, are typically early nineteenth century collegiate in their massing and fenestration with some Greek Revival influence observable in the detail.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: Dartmouth College.
2. Date of erection: Architect selected in 1827, building completed in 1828.
3. Architect, construction overseers: Ammi Burnham Young (1798-1874), architect. Dartmouth professors Chamberlain and Hale, construction supervisors.
4. The building is named for John Thornton, early benefactor of the college during the time of Eleazar Wheelock, the founder and first president of Dartmouth.
5. Notes on alterations and additions: The building served as a dormitory until 1871. Since that time it has served various uses requiring various alteration. The building underwent major interior remodelling in 1924.

The exterior remains largely unchanged.

6. References

- a. R. L. Kenney, The History of Wentworth and Thornton Halls (Student Thesis in Carpenter Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, 1935).
- b. Osmund R. Overby, "Ammi B. Young in the Connecticut Valley," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, vol. XIX, no. 3 (October, 1960), pp. 119-123.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character: This is an early nineteenth century collegiate building, typical in its massing and fenestration, with some Greek Revival influence observable in the detail. The interior has been completely remodelled at various times, but the exterior largely retains the original design.
2. Condition of Fabric: The building is sound and well maintained.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: Rectangular building, three stories plus cellar, 50' x 70'.
2. Foundations: Large blocks of cut granite.
3. Wall construction: Brick walls, painted white.
4. Stoops: Entrance stoops are large blocks of cut granite.
5. Openings
 - a. Doorways and doors: Two principal entrances, one on each end, eight paneled door with side and transom lights set in simple, granite doorway.

- b. Windows and shutters: 6/6 light, double hung windows, granite sills and lintels. Fixed slat shutters.
- 6. Roof
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof, sheet metal covering.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Boxed, moulded eave cornices. Similar horizontal and raking cornices. Horizontal cornice returned across gable ends to describe pediment. Greek profiles.
- C. Technical Description of Interiors: The entire interior has been rebuilt at various times, the last major interior remodeling was in 1924.
- D. Site
 - 1. General setting and orientation: This building is one of a group of buildings that are situated on a slight rise east of the Hanover Common.
 - 2. Walks: Modern, concrete walks.
 - 3. Landscaping: Informal with lawn and large trees.

Prepared by Henry C. Edwards and
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Park Service - September 1959.